

Testimony to the Public Health Committee on the Aid in Dying Legislation.

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Dear Committee Members:

I am not a legislator but I imagine the three questions you consider when looking at a new proposed law are the following.

Is there any important problem that needs to be addressed?

Does this proposed legislation address the problem in an intelligent way?

The problem that exists could roughly be described as the situation a competent, adult, terminally ill person finds themselves in, when they suffer from a medical condition which will lead to their death in the near future, and before they reach that end, will they believe rob them of the things most dear to them, which for many is the ability to intelligently relate to our loved ones and the world, and enjoy life. To many the prospect of a death in the near future, coupled with the possible loss of control over their body, and of their mind, and the ability to communicate, causes extraordinary psychological pain that cannot be alleviated by narcotics or any kind of medication. These persons see such an end as a sort of hell during life, or of a story from Edgar Allen Poe. Under current Connecticut law if they wish to accelerate the end their lives before enduring such hardships, they must do so outside of the care of their physician and loved ones, and in such a way as to not incriminate any person who might help them in their efforts. So these persons are either sentenced to die in a way that is repugnant to them, or find a way to accelerate the end of their lives alone, by such means as they may be able to cobble together. And leave a raw wound for those left behind, who find the deceased slumped in a chair.

Based on the 15 year history of legislation very similar to this in the state of Oregon there is ample evidence to conclude that this legislation proposed in Connecticut would materially address the problem that exists.

Based on the many years of critical study that have been conducted of the Oregon law, there is no evidence to think that adopting the proposed legislation will result in any harm to any persons. I lived in Oregon for ten years. Oregonians are no different than ourselves. Connecticut citizens can "handle" the responsibility of the law.

Not adopting this legislation, will for a certainty cause much more harm and suffering, than adopting it.

Respectfully Submitted

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